



**EFFECT OF COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING TECHNIQUE ON ENGLISH VOCABULARY OF
MIDDLE BASIC STUDENTS IN PULKA, GWOZA LOCAL GOVERNMENT, BORNO STATE,
NIGERIA**

BY

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Abstract

This study assessed the effect of communicative teaching technique on the English language vocabulary of middle Basic 6 students in Pulka, Gwoza Local Government Area, Borno state, Nigeria. One research question and corresponding null hypotheses was formulated to guide the study. A quasi-experimental research design, specifically the pre-test-post-test control design, was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 403 middle Basic students from 5 schools in Pulka, Gwoza Local Government Area. Two schools were selected using cluster sampling technique. A total of 80 students, comprising both boys and girls, were selected using simple random sampling technique through balloting. An adopted English language speaking skills Test (ELSST) was used to measure the effect of communicative teaching technique on students' English vocabulary. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research question. While t-test was used to test the null hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance. The instrument was validated by experts in English language Education and Educational measurement and Evaluation. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to establish the reliability of the instrument, and a reliability coefficient of 0.79 was obtained. The findings revealed that communicative teaching technique had a more significant effect on English language vocabulary (ELV) than the conventional teaching method. The study recommended that government and educational stakeholder should ensure that English language textbooks are designed to include vocabulary exercises and real-life interaction drills. The study also recommended regular training for teachers on the effective implementation of communicative teaching technique to improve English Language vocabulary.

Keywords: Effect, Communicative Teaching Technique, Vocabulary and Middle Basic

Introduction

English language all over the world play a significant role in communication and learning particularly in diverse country like Nigeria with different cultural and religious background. In Basic schools, one important aspect of learning language is vocabulary development used by teachers through the use of textbooks. However, students need adequate vocabulary to speak any language including English which is formally regarded as language of instruction and unity among Nigerians. Therefore, many Basic schools across the country experience difficulties in learning and using English vocabulary due to many reasons which include: ineffective teaching methods where many teachers put emphasis on memorization and teacher-cantered method of instruction. Similarly, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a learned cantered method that encourages participation, interaction and practical use of language in real-life situations. However, through CLT techniques like role play, language games, discussions, dialogues students actively own their learning experiences and engage themselves in learning so that they can improve their vocabulary. Therefore, this study, seeks to examine the effect of CLT on English vocabulary of Middle Basic students with the aim of determining whether or not the technique can improve students' vocabulary acquisition. In the Middle Basic in Gwoza Local Government, Borno state, Nigeria, students are struggling to acquire English vocabulary for affective communication in several subject.

However, in the Middle Basic in Gwoza, most students if not all, face with difficulty in expressing ideas where Students may know what to say but cannot find the right words to communicate their thoughts clearly. However,



this reduce their fluency and Limit their vocabulary competence which causes frequent pauses, and repetition while communicating. Poor communication tend Students use incorrect sentences which lead to low confidence and this is noticed among the Middle Basic students in Gwoza Local Government Area and Learners with limited or inadequate vocabulary often feel reluctant to participate in conversations with peers in the classroom, and restricted interaction may avoid discussions, participation, presentations, and other speaking activities among students because they lack the words needed to speak effectively. Similarly, grammatical errors limit vocabulary and can make it difficult to construct meaningful and accurate sentences. Therefore, Vocabulary is a fundamental component of speaking ability and students must learn it for communicative competence because English is a lingua franca in Nigeria as even stated in the national policy on Education. This is similar to the idea of Paul Nation (2022) which said “vocabulary competence is fundamental to communicative competence and the development of speaking skills because learners cannot express ideas effectively without sufficient vocabulary and students with rich vocabulary tend to perform better in speaking because they can communicate their ideas more fluently, and confidently than students with limited vocabulary. Similarly, Nasir et al (2025) found that lack of vocabulary was a major factor affecting students’ speaking fluency and confidence. However, said, learners with limited vocabulary encounter difficulties in speaking, including reduced fluency and confidence.

According to Kim (2022) observe that student with richer vocabulary knowledge perform better in reading and academic task than those with limited vocabulary. Decoding what kind of vocabulary instruction is best for particular learners should be based on the level of knowledge or the criterion behaviour at which the instruction is aimed. Different type of instruction are needed to achieve different objectives. English is the language of instruction in Nigerian schools and also a second language to learners. All the other school subjects are taught in English, thereby, making the learning of English and vocabulary instructions which correlates with improved learning outcomes. This implies that learners with an extensive vocabulary may perform better than those with a limited vocabulary, and the later may face the challenge of poor performance. According to Nation (2022) observed that vocabulary as central to the four language skills, He explained that vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to language use and directly support listening, speaking, reading and writing and therefore, is the primary aspect of English oral/written communication, which learners are expected to master, pointing out that the mastery of the four communication skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) depends on the amount of vocabulary the learner has.

According to Tsiga, Zuilkowski, and Barnes (2020), in issues in the Teaching of Early Grade Reading in Nigeria supported by USAID, for every language one acquires, one must built a catalogue of words or phrases to be able to speak and comprehend that language. This catalogue of words or phrases is what is normally referred to as vocabulary. It is defined as the words in a language or a special set of words one is trying to learn or the ‘range of language of a person or group’. Webster dictionary defines vocabulary as a list or collection of words and phrases, usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined. This means a stock of words employed by a language group, individual, or field of knowledge. In issues in the teaching of early grade reading in Nigeria, explained that current trends in teaching and learning vocabulary in Nigeria observe that English teachers, especially in the early grades in Nigeria, use few strategies in vocabulary instruction. Most learners go to school with no knowledge of English. This requires extra effort and a variety of strategies for early grade vocabulary instruction. Strategies used to teach vocabulary in Nigerian schools, where English is a second language, include using oral language, teaching the alphabet, word formation and word meaning. Oral language is a system in which spoken words are used to express knowledge, and vocabulary is the main component of oral language. The medium of instruction in Nigerian schools in English, which gives the language prominence in imparting content knowledge which includes animations that link letters shapes and sounds in an engaging story. For example, in introducing the letter /P/ and how it sounds, animations are used to provide a short visual story for an animated parrot eating a watermelon and spitting out the seeds, thereby making the /P/ sound. This is expected to aid learners in remembering how letter /P/ sound. Android or mobile application (apps) are now becoming useful, especially for speaking and reading skills (Tsiga, Zuilkowski & Barneset, 2020).



According to Hirata and Thompson (2022), they examined the effect of students engagement in communicative activities “increased their fluency and accuracy” and improved speaking confidence through communicative learning activities. They also found in their recent study that communicative data-driven learning (DDL) significantly boosts both speaking fluency and grammatical accuracy by engaging students in realistic, corpus-based communication tasks. This technique soar confidence and overcomes the gap between accuracy and fluency by allowing students to rearrange real linguistic forms”. Similarly Patmi and Sabaruddin (2021) in their study carried out on the communicative language teaching with realia was found effective in improving English vocabulary mastery and therefore, In their study, it revealed three key major findings which says, there are: Significant Improvement which is in their experimental study of junior high/Islamic school students, the class taught with CLT and realia scored significantly higher with average score of 71.8 compared to the control group with average score of 63.8 which was greater and showed significant improvement. However, Active Engagement using real objects prevents stress, keeps students interest focused, and drives active participation in the class. Similarly, Deeper Meaning which is in tangible objects allow students to experience lessons in a concrete and visible lesson which drastically enhances their ability to remember and spell new words correctly”.

According to Asrul and Dahlan (2022) assessed the communicative teaching technique improves students English vocabulary mastery before and after learning using CLT method. In their conclusions, as explained, in any Language, acquisition of vocabulary is one of the most difficult task which tend to hinder speaking skills, students find it difficult to accumulate vocabulary so that they can speak fluent English. As for the teachers, it is important to master the principles and techniques of communicative approach to help students improve their learning strategies and build the communicative consciousness to help them make their bank of English vocabulary. In their research work, they concluded that the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in teaching vocabulary shows that students can master vocabulary well and understand information by answering the vocabulary questions if taught through CLT affectively. (Asrul & Dahlan, 2022). According to Alasmari (2015) examined that communicative teaching technique is a great challenge from the teachers when implementing in the classroom and explained that accessing communicative teaching technique materials and preparations of the teachers and their techniques for students requires time in addition to training. Students perceive the learning style as lacking motivation, low proficiency level and resistance to participation in communicative teaching technique are major problems but communicative teaching technique remains the best method of teaching English second language.

According to Derakhshan et al (2015) noted that speaking skills pedagogy has been developing over the past four decades in second language teaching and learning and such skills required constant practice through group techniques. Communicative teaching technique is described as “techniques where practice in using language within a real communicative context is the focus where real information is exchanged and where language used is not totally predictable. According to Alwazir (2016) added that communicative teaching technique need real practice about situation that entails communication. Emphasized that the aim of communicative teaching technique are creating opportunities for learners to use the target language effectively for everyday communication and given learners the ability to express their opinion explicitly without being afraid of judgement and removing their fears to allow them to speak effectively in public. Similarly, According to Uzoma (2018) explained that communicative teaching technique implementation in the classroom is needed and teachers has to implement communicative teaching technique in the class to improve the students’ interests and class participation thereby improve their performance. According to Urrutia (2010) demonstrated that students speaking performance was influenced by difficulties such as lack of vocabulary, differences, and fear of despised and indicated that learners’ cooperation, self-confidence, vocabulary knowledge, and the class environment will encourage them to improve their speaking skills. Similarly, Robby (2010) explained that as claimed by many theorists, one of the major problem associated with speaking difficulty was the fear of mistakes by majority of language learners as a result, they felt reluctant to speak in the classroom.



Statement of the Problem

Despite the essential of English vocabulary in effective communication, many students in Nigeria including Middle Basic students experience difficulties in learning and acquiring vocabulary for effective communication. The use of classical teaching methods by teachers, emphasise on memorization. Teacher-cantered methods like lecture methods, direct method, discussion methods and the likes, may not adequately help students develop their vocabulary competence. However, these continuous challenges affect the student ability to read, speak effectively in English and is making students not to compute in the labour market. Stakeholders in Nigerian Education, School Based Management Committee are more concern about student performance in English language speaking skills. Communicative teaching technique is a learner cantered method that encourages active participation, interaction and language use. Therefore, despite its benefit, there is still uncertainty regarding its effectiveness in improving vocabulary among Middle Basic students in pulka particularly with this crisis of bokoharam. Therefore, the effect of this failure may lead to inability of our students to compete in the labour market and might as well increase the rate of unemployment, and lack of skilled manpower. With the coming of non-governmental organizations, only 5% of their workers are from Borno state the rest are from other states as a result of communication gap with the technical staff. If this persists, it will diminish the culture of national unity, social interaction and preservation of culture as stated in the national policy.

According to Adunola O (2011) Explained that For many years, language teachers are using methods such as direct method known as natural method which only focus on teaching oral skills via repetition and drills, grammar translation method which relies on translation, silent way method that emphasizes learners' autonomy, audio lingual method which is also called army method and sees language as habit formation, lexical approach focus on vocabulary and teaching lexical chunks and those methods fail in this area but communicative teaching technique is a move away from the traditional and classical method of teaching that emphasizes interaction in real life situation in communicative context and the idea behind this method is to help learners communicate effectively and correctively in realistic situations. Therefore, this study is to examined the effect of communicative teaching technique on English vocabulary acquisition of Middle Basic students in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno state, Nigeria with a view to establish whether the approach can improve students' vocabulary.

Objectives to the study

The main objective to the study is to assess the effect of communicative teaching technique on English vocabulary of Middle Basic students in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno State, Nigeria. However, the specific objectives is

- i. Find the effect of communicative teaching technique on English vocabulary of Middle Basic students taught using communicative teaching technique than the conventional teaching method in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno state, Nigeria

Research Question

The study is designed to seek answer to this research question;

- i. What is the effect of communicative teaching technique on English vocabulary of Middle Basic students in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno State, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

In line with the stated objective, the research hypothesis have been formulated in null form to guide the study and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- i HO₁: There is no significant difference in English vocabulary of Middle Basic students taught using communicative teaching technique with those in the conventional teaching method in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno State Nigeria.



Methodology

This study adopted a quasi-experimental research design to examine the effect of communicative teaching technique on students' English vocabulary. According to John W. Creswell and J. D. David Creswell (2023), a quasi-experimental design does not allow complete control of extraneous variables because participants are not randomly assigned to groups. The design is appropriate when a researcher intent to examine cause and effect, relationships, manipulate the independent variables and cannot employ a true experimental design due to practical or administrative constraints. The study employed a pre-test control group design involving 80 Middle Basic students selected from Pulka schools in Gwoza, Borno State. Both the experimental and control groups were pre-tested before the commencement of the treatment. The experimental group was taught English language vocabulary using communicative teaching technique, while the control group was taught using the conventional teaching method. The treatment lasted for seven weeks, after which a post-test was administered to both the groups to determine the effect of communicative teaching technique on students' English language vocabulary. This study employed the simple random sampling technique to select schools for the study while the purposive sampling technique was used to select a total of 80 students drawn from two schools in the Middle Basic in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno state, Nigeria. The students were divided into two groups of control (N= 40) and Experimental (N=40). IELTS instrument was used and adapted from British council website in a journal of English Language teaching (ELT) and validated for data collection. Visual comprehension technique was used.

Results

Research Question one: what is the effect of communicative teaching technique on English Vocabulary of Middle Basic students in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno State, Nigeria?

Mean and standard deviation (SD) on the effect of communicative teaching technique on English Vocabulary of Middle Basic students in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics showing English vocabulary of Middle Basic students in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno state, Nigeria using communicative teaching technique

ELV	N	Mean	S.D	S.E
Pre-test Scores	80	7.84	1.571	.176
Post-test scores	80	10.09	1.577	.176

Pre-test Mean ($N = 80, M = 7.84, SD = 1.571$)

Post-test Mean ($N = 80, M = 10.09, SD = 1.577$)

From the analysis of table, it showed that prior to the treatment, the pre-test group had mean scores of 7.84 and standard deviation (SD) of 1.571 but after the treatment, post-test mean scores was 10.09 and standard deviation of 1.577 which shows that the range of scores between the pre-test group and post-test group was very high after the treatment. The performance scores of students was 10.09 and standard deviation of 1.571. This showed that students taught English vocabulary using communicative teaching technique perform greater than those in conventional teaching method.

H0₁: There was no significant difference between vocabulary and phonemic awareness of students taught using communicative teaching techniques than those in the conventional methods.

Table 2: T-test for dependent samples using communicative teaching technique on English Vocabulary (ELV) of Middle Basic students in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno state, Nigeria

ELV	N	Mean	S.D	df	t-cal	P-value
Pre-test Post-test scores	80	2.250	2.132	79	9.440	.000

A paired sample t-test was used and suggested that there was significant difference in the level of English vocabulary of Middle Basic students when taught using communicative teaching technique than those in



conventional teaching method with pre-test mean scores ($M=7.84$, $SD= 1.571$) and post-test mean scores ($M=10.09$, $SD= 1.577$) $t(79) = 9.440$, $p < 0.5$ and the result indicated that there was significant difference in the level of English vocabulary of Middle Basic students taught using communicative teaching technique than those in conventional teaching method and therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. From table, the result of the t-test analysis of post-test scores based on the English vocabulary of Middle Basic students taught using communicative teaching technique was higher than those in conventional teaching method. Therefore, the calculated t-test of 9.440 was greater than the p-value of .05 at degree of freedom (df) 79 and therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected

Discussion of the Findings

This study assessed the effect of communicative teaching technique on English Vocabulary of Middle Basic students in Pulka, Gwoza Local Government, Borno state, Nigeria, one research question and corresponding null hypothesis were tested in the study. From the outcome of the analysis, the research question one and its corresponding null hypothesis one showed that students taught English Vocabulary using communicative teaching technique performed significantly better than their counterparts in the conventional teaching method as indicated in the level, the pre-test mean scores and post-test mean scores therefore, the result indicated that there was significant difference in the level of English vocabulary of Middle Basic students taught using communicative teaching technique than those in the conventional teaching method and therefore, the null hypothesis was retained.

From the result of the t-test analysis, the post-test scores based on the English vocabulary of Middle Basic students taught using communicative teaching technique was higher than those in conventional teaching method. Therefore, the calculated t-test of 9.440 was greater than the p-value of .05 at degree of freedom (df) 79 and therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. In a similar studies carried out by Asrul and Dahlan (2022), on the use of communicative teaching technique in improving students' English vocabulary, where the study employed pre-test and post-test design, the findings revealed that students' vocabulary achievement improved significantly after exposure to CLT the retained hypothesis indicated that CLT enhanced vocabulary mastery because students learned new words through interaction. According to Nguyen and Van (2023), they examined the role of constructivism in enhancing vocabulary retention among EFL students using experimental approach the research found that learners expose to interactive and communication based instruction perform significantly better in vocabulary retention than those taught through conventional teaching method and therefore, the null hypothesis was also retained. Similarly, Samartin (2023) studied the effect of gamified and communicative learning activities on junior high school students' English vocabulary retention. The study adopted an experimental design and found statistically significant differences between students taught communicative game-based activities and those taught using conventional teaching method and therefore, the null hypothesis was also retained.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that communicative teaching technique significantly improves students' English vocabulary more effectively than the conventional teaching method among Middle Basic students in Pulka, Gwoza, Borno state, Nigeria.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the findings of this study.

1. English language teachers should undergo regular training and professional development programmes on the effective use of communicative teaching techniques to improve students' vocabulary at the Middle Basic level.



2. Teachers should continuously update their knowledge by reviewing relevant literature and participating in workshops on communicative and interactive language teaching strategies to improve their competence in teaching of vocabulary for effective speaking.
3. Curriculum planners should integrate learner-centered activities and logically relevant instructional resources into the English language curriculum to enhance the teaching and learning of English vocabulary

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